



# News Release

Office of the Louisiana State Fire Marshal  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Natchitoches, LA-** State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning released information today in reference to arrests that have been made in connection with a set fire at a Natchitoches business in an attempt to cover up thefts by employees.

The Natchitoches Fire Department responded on October 6, to 113 Kaiser Avenue of a report that the Dollar General Store was on fire. When firefighters arrived they found the rear door area of the store on fire and quickly extinguished the fire before it spread to other businesses. The fire did endanger lives and property and if not for the rapid intervention of the fire department the damage would have been more severe.

The State Fire Marshal’s Office was called to investigate this fire. It was determined that the fire was intentionally set and was the act of arson. Fire Marshal Deputies worked closely with the Natchitoches Police Department and developed suspects. The Fire Marshal’s Office did arrest the store manager Kierstien Martin (dob. 1-5-90) and employee Melissa Tucker (dob. 9-2-79) both with aggravated arson. Evidence obtained from the scene indicated that money and merchandise was missing from the business. Both suspects were booking into the Natchitoches Parish Jail.

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